

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116  
U.S. Application No.: 09/885,171

**REMARKS**

Claims 2-14, 20 and 22-23 are pending in the application. By this Amendment, claims 15-19 and 24 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 2-7, 10, 13, 14 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being unpatentable over Nishida (U.S. Patent No. 5,497,432) in view of Kuehl (U. S. Patent No. 5,428,692). Claims 8-9, 11-12 are allowed over the prior art. Claims 22-24 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicant submits that claim 2 includes the subject matter of allowable claim 24, and thus, claim 2 is believed to be allowable.

Claims 3-7, 10, 13, 14, 20, which ultimately depend from claim 2, are believed to be allowable.

The remaining allowable claims 23 and 24 have been rewritten in independent form and thus are believed to be allowable.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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